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Toponymic websites

Toponymic Websites in China

Submitted by China**

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Summary

Toponymic organs at all levels established a lot of geographical names websites. The websites in China plays important roles in giving assistance to toponymic works, popularizing geographical names knowledge, providing integral and correct geographical names information. The point of further development of websites in China is how to improve the functions and show characteristics.

As the information technology widely used, Chinese government speeds up the development of e-government in recent years. Toponymic organs at all levels established a lot of geographical names websites. Some of the websites have independent domain names. Some are a part of government websites or websites with comprehensive contents. The geographical names websites offer the services of geographical names information, propagate geographical names culture, and have played active roles in the standardization of geographical names.

According to incomplete statistics, there are more than 120 geographical names websites in China by the end of May 2007, including 12 websites sponsored by toponymic organs at or above the provincial level and others sponsored by toponymic organs of municipals or counties, geographical names websites at county level occupy 90% of the total. More and more geographical names websites have appeared since Chinese government initiated the Geographical Names Public Services Project in 2005.

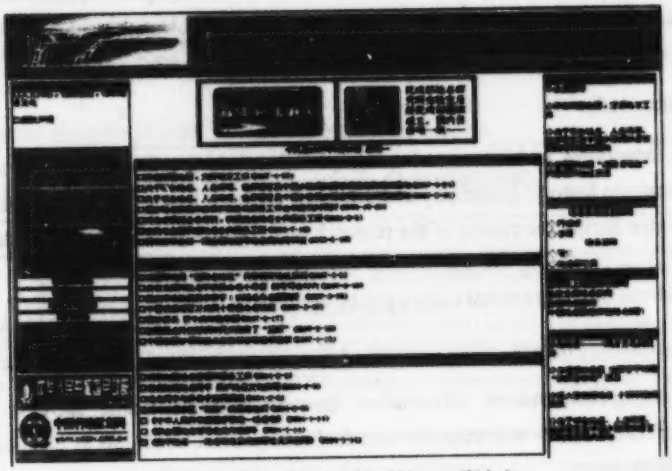

Figure 1: China Geographical Names Website

Functions of Chinese geographical names websites

The main functions of the various geographical names websites in China include:

1. As the platform of carrying out works by toponymic organ

·Naming and renaming

The geographical names are dynamic. The website can be updated quickly. The combination of them bring convenient for us to keep a close watch on the changing of geographical names and find the hidden order.

·Publishing news about geographical names work

Web news publishing system enhances the capability of reporting news. The news classification can be detailed. News update and maintenance are more convenient and quick. The working efficiency of toponymic organs that often browse graphical names news can be improved.

·Toponymic laws and regulations

All kinds of toponymic laws and regulations can be found in geographical names websites. Toponymic organs can obtain higher efficiency.

·Interactive platform for communication

Network users take part in toponymic activities such as collecting geographical names and talking over hot issues about geographical names by free discussion or voting through websites. It is helpful for geographical names work as well as increasing people's interests about geographical names.

2. As a media of propagandizing geographical names culture

·Historic interests

Geographical name is the carrier of the regional culture. All historic interests are related with geographical names. The process of knowing historic interests is an opportunity to know the meanings of geographical names. This process is helpful for learning social custom and local cultures.

·Toponymic knowledge

The origin, anecdotes and history of geographical names are introduced in websites. These materials combine history, geography and art. They are both funny reading materials and having important value during the course of the research on natural science and social science.

3. As the platform of geographical names public services

·Querying geographical names

Offering geographical names information through website. Some provide functions as geographical names query and map downloads. Some provide functions as category query, joint query and fuzzy query.

·Electronic map service

It is designed to provide user with map display and query (as shown in figure 2 is Chongqing Geographical Names Information Query Website). Some fine electronic map in China have user-friendly interface, sufficient items of geographical names, correct searching results, intelligent analysis function (for example, display the names of the nearby hotels when search restaurants around one region) and timely response after submitting the query. Route analysis include driving way and public traffic way. Several different strategies such as nearest route and optimization route can be offered.

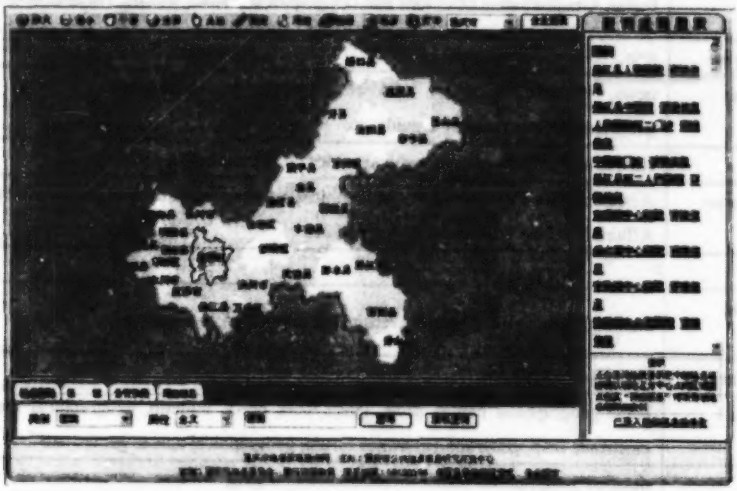

Figure 2: Chongqing Geographical Names Information Query Website

Conclusion

Establishing the geographical names website is a system engineering that integrates the geographical names works with the information technology. The websites in China plays important roles in giving assistance to toponymic works, popularizing geographical names knowledge, providing integral and correct geographical names information. The point of further development of websites in China is how to improve the functions and show characteristics.

Appendix: some geographical names websites in China

Website Name	China Administrative Divisions Website (中国行政区划网)
Website Address	http://www.xzqh.org.cn
Main Columns	Comprehensive Information, bulletin, latest work news, data center, laws and regulations, latest theory news, route and position query, etc
Feature	Offering the information about the administrative divisions in China
Website Sponsor	Administrative Divisions and Geographical Names Department of the Ministry of Civil Affairs

Website Name	China Geographical Names Website (中国地名网)
Website Address	http://www.cgn.ac.cn
Main Columns	latest work news, geographical names news, achievements of research, geographical names data, geographical names signs test, forum, etc
Feature	Offering the information about changing of the geographical names in China
Website Sponsor	China Institute of Toponymy

Website Name	Fujian Administrative Divisions and Geographical Names Website (福建区划地名网)
Website Address	http://www.fjqhdmw.com
Main Columns	news, bulletin, discovery and research, geographical names culture, wonderful geographical names, service guide, etc
Feature	Having a great deal of geographical names culture materials
Website Sponsor	Administrative Divisions and Geographical Names Department of Fujian Bureau of Civil Affairs & Fujian Toponymy Research Society

Website Name	Nanjing Geographical Names Website (南京地名网)
Website Address	http://njdm.nj.gov.cn
Main Columns	latest geographical names news, latest work news, bulletin, geographical names query, electronic map, geographical names forum, geographical names games, etc
Feature	detailed geographical names information of Nanjing
Website Sponsor	Nanjing Geographical Names Council

Website Name	Ningbo GeographicalNnames Website (宁波地名网)
Website Address	http://www.nbdm.gov.cn
Main Columns	latest work news, laws and regulations, work guide, geographical names query, famous places, message board, etc
Feature	user-friendly interface, detailed geographical names information of Ningbo
Website Sponsor	Ningbo Geographical Names Council

Website Name	Chongqing Geographical Names Information Query Website （重庆地名信息网）
Website Address	http://www.cq156.cn
Main Columns	geographical names query, driving route query, bus route query, etc
Feature	detailed geographical names information of Chongqing
Website Sponsor	Chongqing Research and Development of Common Geographical Names Information Center